(b) The Prime Minister visited Mauritius from 10—12 March, 2000, at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Mauritius to attend their Millennium Independence Day celebrations as the Chief Guest. He was accompanied by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs. Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Minister of State for Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries, who was on an official visit to Mauritius during that period, also joined the Prime Minster's delegation.

(c) and (d) These agreements for bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, information technology, a line of credit and a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of oceanography were signed during this visit.

Indo-China Relations

2970. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been steady improvement in the ties in the recent past with China;

(b) if so, whether this has resulted in the visit of the External Affairs Minister some time back to Beijing;

(c) whether both countries have shown accommodations and understandings on a number of the vital areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (d) As the Prime Minister stated in the Rajya Sabha on 29-5-98, we remain committed to the development of friendly, co-operative, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship with China. In line with this policy, our relations with China have diversified and expanded.

External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh visited China on June 14-15, 1999. During the visit, there was agreement on promoting CBMs, having a security dialogue, expanding economic and trade relations and jointly celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations (April 1, 2000).

At the joint invitation of the Governments of China and Portugal, I represented India at the Macau Handover Ceremonies on December 19-20,

1999. Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Murasoli Maran visited China for the Sixth Meeting of the India-China Joint Group on Economic Relations, Trade, and Science and Technology, held in Beijing on February 21-22, 2000.

The President stated in his Address to Parliament on February 23, 2000 that he would undertake a State visit to China in May 2000.

Our two countries share similarily of views on several international and regional issues. Both sides feel that friendly and co-operative relations between India and China would contribute to peace, stability and economic development of the region and the world. At the same time, we have unresolved bilateral issues that we would like to see addressed in a meaningful manner.

Incidents of Racist attacks on Asians

2971. SHRI RAM DAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether incidents of racist attacks on Asians particularly on Indians, have become alarmingly more frequent and vicious according to a London based report published in the Hindustan Times dated 17-3-2000.

(b) whether people behind such operations are reportedly nicknamed "Operations Napkin"; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to look into this matter at diplomatic level in consultation with concerned countries without any further delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Government have seen the report published in the Hindustan Times of 17-03-2000.

(b) "Operation Napkin" was the codename for an undercover operation carried out in March, 2000 by the Gloucester police in an attempt to try and identify racists.

(c) The Government of India has a consistent policy against racism of all kinds. The Government is monitoring the situation continuously. The Indian High Commission in London is in touch with the concerned authorities of the British Government to ensure that Indian nationals are not being targeted in racist attacks.